

Weekly Compilation of  
**Presidential  
Documents**



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## WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

## PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, January 26, 2001

## **Inaugural Address**

*January 20, 2001*

Thank you, all. Chief Justice Rehnquist, President Carter, President Bush, President Clinton, distinguished guests, and my fellow citizens. The peaceful transfer of authority is rare in history, yet common in our country. With a simple oath, we affirm old traditions and make new beginnings.

As I begin, I thank President Clinton for his service to our Nation, and I thank Vice President Gore for a contest conducted with spirit and ended with grace.

I am honored and humbled to stand here where so many of America's leaders have come before me, and so many will follow. We have a place, all of us, in a long story, a story we continue but whose end we will not see. It is a story of a new world that became a friend and liberator of the old, the story of a slave-holding society that became a servant of freedom, the story of a power that went into the world to protect but not possess, to defend but not to conquer.

It is the American story, a story of flawed and fallible people united across the generations by grand and enduring ideals. The grandest of these ideals is an unfolding American promise that everyone belongs, that everyone deserves a chance, that no insignificant person was ever born.

Americans are called to enact this promise in our lives and in our laws. And though our Nation has sometimes halted and sometimes delayed, we must follow no other course.

Through much of the last century, America's faith in freedom and democracy was a rock in a raging sea. Now it is a seed upon the wind, taking root in many nations. Our democratic faith is more than the creed of our country. It is the inborn hope of our humanity, an ideal we carry but do not own, a trust we bear and pass along. Even after nearly 225 years, we have a long way yet to travel.

While many of our citizens prosper, others doubt the promise, even the justice of our own country. The ambitions of some Americans are limited by failing schools and hidden prejudice and the circumstances of their birth. And sometimes our differences run so deep, it seems we share a continent but not a country. We do not accept this, and we will not allow it.

Our unity, our Union, is a serious work of leaders and citizens and every generation. And this is my solemn pledge: I will work to build a single nation of justice and opportunity. I know this is in our reach because we are guided by a power larger than ourselves, who creates us equal, in His image, and we are confident in principles that unite and lead us onward.

America has never been united by blood or birth or soil. We are bound by ideals that move us beyond our backgrounds, lift us above our interests, and teach us what it means to be citizens. Every child must be taught these principles. Every citizen must uphold them. And every immigrant, by embracing these ideals, makes our country more, not less, American.

Today we affirm a new commitment to live out our Nation's promise through civility, courage, compassion, and character. America at its best matches a commitment to principle with a concern for civility. A civil society demands from each of us good will and respect, fair dealing and forgiveness.

Some seem to believe that our politics can afford to be petty because in a time of peace the stakes of our debates appear small. But the stakes for America are never small. If our country does not lead the cause of freedom, it will not be led. If we do not turn the hearts of children toward knowledge and character, we will lose their gifts and undermine their idealism. If we permit our economy to drift and decline, the vulnerable will suffer most.

We must live up to the calling we share. Civility is not a tactic or a sentiment; it is the determined choice of trust over cynicism, of community over chaos. And this commitment, if we keep it, is a way to shared accomplishment.

America at its best is also courageous. Our national courage has been clear in times of depression and war, when defeating common dangers defined our common good. Now we must choose if the example of our fathers and mothers will inspire us or condemn us. We must show courage in a time of blessing by confronting problems instead of passing them on to future generations.

Together we will reclaim America's schools before ignorance and apathy claim more young lives. We will reform Social Security and Medicare, sparing our children from struggles we have the power to prevent. And we will reduce taxes to recover the momentum of our economy and reward the effort and enterprise of working Americans.

We will build our defenses beyond challenge, lest weakness invite challenge. We will confront weapons of mass destruction, so that a new century is spared new horrors. The enemies of liberty and our country should make no mistake: America remains engaged in the world, by history and by choice, shaping a balance of power that favors freedom.

We will defend our allies and our interests. We will show purpose without arrogance. We will meet aggression and bad faith with resolve and strength. And to all nations, we will speak for the values that gave our Nation birth.

America at its best is compassionate. In the quiet of American conscience, we know that deep, persistent poverty is unworthy of our Nation's promise. And whatever our views of its cause, we can agree that children at risk are not at fault.

Abandonment and abuse are not acts of God; they are failures of love. And the proliferation of prisons, however necessary, is no substitute for hope and order in our souls. Where there is suffering, there is duty. Americans in need are not strangers; they are citizens—not problems but priorities. And all of us are diminished when any are hopeless.

Government has great responsibilities for public safety and public health, for civil rights

and common schools. Yet, compassion is the work of a nation, not just a government. And some needs and hurts are so deep they will only respond to a mentor's touch or a pastor's prayer. Church and charity, synagogue and mosque lend our communities their humanity, and they will have an honored place in our plans and in our laws.

Many in our country do not know the pain of poverty. But we can listen to those who do. And I can pledge our Nation to a goal: When we see that wounded traveler on the road to Jericho, we will not pass to the other side.

America at its best is a place where personal responsibility is valued and expected. Encouraging responsibility is not a search for scapegoats; it is a call to conscience. And though it requires sacrifice, it brings a deeper fulfillment. We find the fullness of life not only in options but in commitments. And we find that children and community are the commitments that set us free.

Our public interest depends on private character, on civic duty and family bonds and basic fairness, on uncounted, unhonored acts of decency, which give direction to our freedom.

Sometimes in life we're called to do great things. But as a saint of our times has said, "Every day we are called to do small things with great love." The most important tasks of a democracy are done by everyone.

I will live and lead by these principles: to advance my convictions with civility, to serve the public interest with courage, to speak for greater justice and compassion, to call for responsibility and try to live it, as well. In all these ways, I will bring the values of our history to the care of our times.

What you do is as important as anything Government does. I ask you to seek a common good beyond your comfort, to defend needed reforms against easy attacks, to serve your Nation, beginning with your neighbor. I ask you to be citizens: Citizens, not spectators; citizens, not subjects; responsible citizens building communities of service and a nation of character.

Americans are generous and strong and decent, not because we believe in ourselves

but because we hold beliefs beyond ourselves. When this spirit of citizenship is missing, no Government program can replace it. When this spirit is present, no wrong can stand against it.

After the Declaration of Independence was signed, Virginia statesman John Page wrote to Thomas Jefferson, "We know the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. Do you not think an angel rides in the whirlwind and directs this storm?"

Much time has passed since Jefferson arrived for his inauguration. The years and changes accumulate, but the themes of this day, he would know: our Nation's grand story of courage and its simple dream of dignity.

We are not this story's author, who fills time and eternity with his purpose. Yet, his purpose is achieved in our duty. And our duty is fulfilled in service to one another. Never tiring, never yielding, never finishing, we renew that purpose today, to make our country more just and generous, to affirm the dignity of our lives and every life. This work continues, the story goes on, and an angel still rides in the whirlwind and directs this storm.

God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. at the West Front of the Capitol. Prior to the address, Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist administered the oath of office.

## **Memorandum on Standards of Official Conduct**

*January 20, 2001*

*Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies*

*Subject: Standards of Official Conduct*

Everyone who enters into public service for the United States has a duty to the American people to maintain the highest standards of integrity in Government. I ask you to ensure that all personnel within your departments and agencies are familiar with, and faithfully observe, applicable ethics laws and regulations, including the following general principles from the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch:

(1) Public service is a public trust, requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles above private gain.

(2) Employees shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.

(3) Employees shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest.

(4) An employee shall not, except as permitted by applicable law or regulation, solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the employee's agency, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's duties.

(5) Employees shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.

(6) Employees shall not knowingly make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the Government.

(7) Employees shall not use public office for private gain.

(8) Employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.

(9) Employees shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.

(10) Employees shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with official Government duties and responsibilities.

(11) Employees shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.

(12) Employees shall satisfy in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those—such as Federal, State, or local taxes—that are imposed by law.

(13) Employees shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.

(14) Employees shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they

are violating applicable law or the ethical standards in applicable regulations.

Executive branch employees should also be fully aware that their post-employment activities with respect to lobbying and other forms of representation will be bound by the restrictions of 18 U.S.C. 207.

Please thank the personnel of your departments and agencies for their commitment to maintain the highest standards of integrity in Government as we serve the American people.

**George W. Bush**

**Proclamation 7403—National Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving, 2001**  
*January 20, 2001*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

Nearly 200 years ago, on March 4, 1801, our young Nation celebrated an important milestone in its history, the first transfer of power between political parties, as Thomas Jefferson took the oath of office as President. On this bicentennial of that event, we pause to remember and give thanks to Almighty God for our unbroken heritage of democracy, the peaceful transition of power, and the perseverance of our Government through the challenges of war and peace, want and prosperity, discord and harmony.

President Jefferson also wrote, “The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time” and asked, “Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are of God?” Indeed, it is appropriate to mark this occasion by remembering the words of President Jefferson and the examples of Americans of the past and today who in times of both joy and need turn to Almighty God in prayer. Times of plenty, like times of crisis, are tests of American character. Today, I seek God’s guidance and His blessings on our land and all our people. Knowing that I cannot succeed in this task without the favor of God and the prayers of the people, I ask all Americans to join with me in prayer and thanksgiving.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 21, 2001, a National Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving and call upon the citizens of our Nation to gather together in homes and places of worship to pray alone and together and offer thanksgiving to God for all the blessings of this great and good land. On this day, I call upon Americans to recall all that unites us. Let us become a nation rich not only in material wealth but in ideals—rich in justice and compassion and family love and moral courage. I ask Americans to bow our heads in humility before our Heavenly Father, a God who calls us not to judge our neighbors, but to love them, to ask His guidance upon our Nation and its leaders in every level of government.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., January 24, 2001]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 22, and it was published in *Federal Register* on January 25.

**Remarks at a Swearing-In Ceremony for New White House Staff**

*January 22, 2001*

Thank you very much. Thank you. Don’t go overboard. [*Laughter*] Sit down, please—no place to sit. [*Laughter*] Okay, don’t sit down.

Thank you all for coming. Mr. Vice President, thank you very much. Chief of Staff Card, I’m honored to have you by my side. I started work this morning, and there he was, smiling and ready to go on behalf of the American people.

The First Lady and I are honored to be living here, and we’re honored to be hosting this event, the first we’ve done in this glorious room since the Inauguration.

I want to thank the family members who are here. Thank you for your sacrifice. Thank you for the long hours, accepting the long hours that your loved one is about to put in on behalf of the American people. Some of the folks that are here have worked in past administrations. Some of us, this is a new experience. But for all of us, it is an honor of a lifetime, and it is our privilege to share this together.

I am here to lead the executive branch of Government. You all are here because you have my full confidence. And we are here with the same basic purpose, to serve the American people. We have all taken an oath, and from this moment on it is our jobs to honor it.

Today everything is so promising and new. My hope is that the day will never come when any of us take this place for granted and this honor for granted. As we serve, we must always remember three things.

First, we must remember the high standards that come with high office. This begins with careful adherence to the rules. I expect every member of this administration to stay well within the boundaries that define legal and ethical conduct. This means avoiding even the appearance of problems. This means checking and, if need be, doublechecking that the rules have been obeyed. This means never compromising those rules. No one in the White House should be afraid to confront the people they work for, for ethical concerns. And no one should hesitate to confront me, as well. We're all accountable to one another. And above all, we're all accountable to the law and to the American people. My White House Counsel, Al Gonzalez, is my point man on these issues. If you have even a hint of ethical doubt, I urge you to talk to Al.

Second, we must remember that high standards of conduct involve not only obeying the law but showing civility. As we go about our work, there is no excuse for arrogance and never a reason for disrespect toward others. People who work here are highly visible throughout the Government. In many ways, in many of your dealings, you'll be the face and voice of the White House staff. You will be my representative. I expect each of you, as an official of this administra-

tion, to be an example of humility and decency and fairness.

And finally, we must all remember that we are here for a reason. You and I and the Vice President share the same goals for our country and the same commitment to achieving them. We are here to make progress. We are not here just to mark time. The next few weeks, we'll affirm the central policy goals of this administration, beginning this week with education reform.

Everyone will know where we stand. Everyone will know where we're headed. Every morning I want you to remember these goals. Every evening I want you to review the progress we have made. I want it said of us, at the end of our service, that promises made were promises kept.

On a mantelpiece in this great house is inscribed the prayer of John Adams, that only the wise and honest may rule under this roof. He was speaking of those who live here. But wisdom and honesty are also required of those who work here. I know each of you is capable of meeting that charge. This is only our second day, but time moves fast around here. So let us begin the work we were hired to do and leave this a better place than we found it.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 a.m. in the East Room at the White House.

## **Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Republican Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters**

*January 22, 2001*

### **Legislative Agenda**

**The President.** Thank you all for coming. It's been my honor to host a working lunch with the Speaker and Members from the House and even Members from the United States Senate. This is the beginning of a series of luncheons and dinners that I will have and the Vice President will have with Members of the Congress. If we're to get an agenda through the Congress, it's best that I be able to personally explain the issues and what I'm attempting to do.

I've told the leadership that they should be expecting a strong education reform package, a tax relief package, and a Medicare and Social Security reform package and a package to help pay the folks in the military more money. And I can't wait to work with them to get the people's business done.

This is not the last time I'm going to see you all over here, nor will the meetings be only Republican; we'll have Democrats come here quite a few times, as well, to get some things done.

So I want to thank you all for coming. I'm honored you're here. It's my first lunch in this part of the White House complex, and it's fitting that it be with Members of the legislative branch. Thanks for coming.

#### **Abortion Funding**

**Q.** Mr. President, are you going to reverse the Executive order allowing abortion funding and counseling—Federal funds for abortion counseling and funding overseas?

**The President.** Yes, I am.

**Q.** When will you do that, sir?

**The President.** Soon.

**Q.** [*Inaudible*]—Executive orders reversing President Clinton's?

**The President.** Yes.

#### **Fetal Tissue Research**

**Q.** What about fetal tissue research? What about fetal tissue research?

**The President.** I'll deal with that issue later.

#### **Resolution of President Clinton's Legal Issues**

**Q.** Mr. President, how do you react to the deal that President Clinton entered into with the Independent Counsel, Robert Ray? What's your interpretation of that agreement, and were you considering a pardon should it have come to that?

**The President.** I hadn't considered a pardon because the man hadn't been indicted. And my feeling about the actions of last Friday was, it's finally over with; it's now time to move on. And I think the country is pleased that it's time to move on, and that's exactly what we're going to do.

**Q.** Was it appropriate, sir?

**The President.** Thank you all. The pleasure is mine, Fournier [Ron Fournier, Associated Press]. [*Laughter*]

**Q.** Welcome to the White House.

**The President.** It's an honor to be here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

#### **Remarks at a Reading Roundtable January 22, 2001**

Laura and I have been honored to host a discussion on an incredibly important subject, and that's education and reading. I really appreciate the Secretary of Education for coming, Dr. Rod Paige; and for educators, leaders, from all around the country who've come here to the Roosevelt Room.

Phyllis Hunter coined a phrase that I quote a lot, and that is, "Reading is the new civil right." It's the cornerstone of hope and opportunity in America, and we're going to make sure every child has the opportunity to learn to read. That means we're going to have scientific-based knowledge be the cornerstone of our curriculum. And that's why I appreciate Reid Lyon and others, experts in the field of reading, for being here to help make sure our curriculum reflect that which works.

We're going to diagnose children early and correct problems when we find them. As importantly, I'm going to ask Congress to spend money on teacher training, to make sure that our teachers, the heart and soul of the education system, have got the tools necessary to teach children to read.

I'm excited about working with the pros in the field of education. This is not a Republican issue; it's not a Democrat issue; it's not an independent issue; this is an American issue, and the most fundamental of all American issues. If the mission is to make sure the American experience touches every willing heart, every person in the country, it starts with making sure our children learn to read, and it starts with making sure children learn to read early. And one of the key initiatives that we have been discussing is, how do we make sure that we get science-



based reading instruction to the youngest of the young? One way is to make sure that Head Start has a reading component as a part of its overall mission.

So I want to thank you all for coming. This is a week where I'm going to, hopefully, focus the Nation's attention on public schools and how the Congress and the executive branch can work together to pass law and appropriate money that will enable Dr. Paige and myself to work on the noblest of all missions, that every single child be educated in America, and not one—I mean not one—be left behind.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:49 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Education Roderick R. Paige; G. Reid Lyon, chief, Child Development Branch, National Institute for Child Health and Human Development; and Phyllis Hunter, consultant, Texas Reading Initiative.

### **Remarks Following a Meeting With Democratic Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters** *January 22, 2001*

#### **Legislative Agenda on Education**

**The President.** Thank you all for coming this afternoon. I've had the honor of hosting a group of distinguished folks who have had experience with Government here, that happen to be of the Democrat persuasion. We had a discussion about—an advisory session about what to think about in Washington, about how to move issues such as education. We've spent a lot of time talking about education and how to get an education agenda moving forward in this important town.

I can't thank the former Senators and a man who has seen enough klieg lights in his day to know what they're all about, and of course, the Ambassador and Bill Gray, the distinguished chairman of the United Negro College Fund for being here. For me, it's been a very helpful discussion.

Ambassador Strauss said something that's really important and is so true. He reminded me that Democrats are just as patriotic about their country as Republicans, that there is good in everybody. And that's what I'm going to look for. This administration is going to

seek the good in everybody and find that ability to come together for the good of the country, as well.

So I want to thank these distinguished citizens of the country for being here, people who brought class and distinction when they held power and set a good legacy for those of us who follow.

Thank you.

Mr. Ambassador, do you want to say something?

**Former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union Robert Strauss.** I want to say, all of us are delighted to be here, and all of us are pleased that the President extended this invitation. I think that the group not only is appreciative, but they've tried to be responsible to the discussion.

Thank you.

**Q.** Mr. President, how do you square your decision—how do you square your decision, Mr. President to—

**The President.** I'm not sure. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:25 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to William Gray III, president, United Negro College Fund. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

### **Statement to Participants in the March for Life**

*January 22, 2001*

Good afternoon, friends and fellow citizens. Two days ago, Americans gathered on the Washington Mall to celebrate our Nation's ideals. Today, you are gathered to remind our country that one of those ideals is the infinite value of every life.

I deeply appreciate your message and your work. You see the weak and defenseless, and you try to help them. You see the hardship of many young mothers and their unborn children, and you care for them both. In so many ways, you make our society more compassionate and welcoming.

We share a great goal: to work toward a day when every child is welcomed in life and protected in law. We know this will not come easily, or all at once. But the goal leads us onward: to build a culture of life, affirming

that every person, at every stage and season of life, is created equal in God's image.

The promises of our Declaration of Independence are not just for the strong, the independent, or the healthy. They are for everyone—including unborn children. We are a society with enough compassion and wealth and love to care for both mothers and their children, to seek the promise and potential in every human life.

I believe that we are making progress toward that goal. I trust in the good hearts of Americans. I trust in the unfolding promise of our country—an expanding circle of inclusion and protection. And I trust in the civility and good sense of our citizens—a willingness to engage our differences in a spirit of tolerance and good will.

All of you marching today have never tired in a good cause. Thank you for your conviction, your idealism, and your courage. May God bless you all.

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

### **Memorandum on Restoration of the Mexico City Policy**

*January 22, 2001*

*Memorandum for the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development*

*Subject: Restoration of the Mexico City Policy*

The Mexico City Policy announced by President Reagan in 1984 required non-governmental organizations to agree as a condition of their receipt of Federal funds that such organizations would neither perform nor actively promote abortion as a method of family planning in other nations. This policy was in effect until it was rescinded on January 22, 1993.

It is my conviction that taxpayer funds should not be used to pay for abortions or advocate or actively promote abortion, either here or abroad. It is therefore my belief that the Mexico City Policy should be restored. Accordingly, I hereby rescind the "Memorandum for the Acting Administrator of the

Agency for International Development, Subject: AID Family Planning Grants/Mexico City Policy," dated January 22, 1993, and I direct the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to reinstate in full all of the requirements of the Mexico City Policy in effect on January 19, 1993.

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

### **Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Education Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters**

*January 23, 2001*

#### **Legislative Agenda on Education**

**The President.** Good morning. I want to welcome you all. I particularly want to welcome senior Members of the Senate and the House. We're here today to discuss a domestic policy issue of high importance, and that's public education, how to make sure every child in America gets educated.

I've always said that public schools, the common schools, issues related to public schools are not a Republican issue or Democrat issue; it's an American issue. And we'll agree on things. We won't agree on things. But we'll always agree that making sure every child is educated is of national importance. It is a major priority.

There's a role for the Federal Government. There's a role for the State government. There's a role for local governments. And part of our discussions and eventual legislation will recognize those roles. And I'm so honored that the Senators came over and Members of the House, the leadership, that's going to help carry legislation.

I believe the best way for the Vice President and I to help the legislative process is to discuss issues in a frank and open way, and that's the beginning of a process here.

So thank you all for coming. I'm honored you're here.

#### **Campaign Finance Reform**

**Q.** Mr. President, Senator McCain yesterday said that he has a mandate. Do you agree

with him, that he has a mandate? And if so, what—

**The President.** I'm going to meet with the Senator tomorrow night to discuss issues of concern for him. I suspect one of them might be campaign funding reform. But I'll let you know how the conversation goes. I'm confident it's going to be friendly and productive. John and I are friends. I remember we debated this issue several times. I think you might have been there.

**Q.** Do you think he has a mandate?

**The President.** And I think there's a need to discuss good campaign funding reform, and we will.

### **Education Agenda**

**Q.** How much of a sticking point for Democrats do you think your school choice or voucher program is? And are you willing to give ground in order to get a broader deal?

**The President.** I think that there is consensus on a couple of things: One, accountability is the cornerstone for reform; and secondly, in order for there to be an accountability system that's got merit, there has to be a consequence. And that's what we're going to discuss. Representative Miller from the State of California understands that accountability is crucial for success. And so does Boehner, and I hope the Senators do. I haven't had a chance to speak specifically with Senator Kennedy yet. I'm about to.

But we've got a measure, and there needs to be flexibility at the local level to make sure that local folks can chart the path of excellence. But in order for an accountability system to work, there has to be consequences. And I believe one of the most important consequences will be, after a period of time, giving schools the time to adjust and districts time to try different things if they're failing, that parents ought to be given different options.

If children are trapped in schools that will not teach and will not change, there has to be a different consequence. None of us at the Federal Government should try to impose a school voucher plan on States and local jurisdictions. That's not the prerogative of the Federal Government, as far as I'm concerned. But to the extent that the Federal

Government spends money, we ought to expect good results and good consequences.

**Q.** Thank you.

**The President.** I can't tell you what a pleasure it is.

### **California Electricity Shortages**

**Q.** [Inaudible]—to do about the California crisis?

**The President.** You'll hear something today.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Representative George Miller. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

### **Remarks on Submitting the Education Plan to Congress**

*January 23, 2001*

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I appreciate you being here, and it's good to see a former Secretary of Education here. Lamar, thank you very much for coming; surrounded by two fine Texans, I might add. [Laughter] You are in good position. I was going to say a rose between two thorns, but—[laughter]—Diana Natalicio is not a thorn. She's a fabulous educator in the great State of Texas. Miller, on the other hand—[laughter]. At any rate, I'm glad you all are here. It's good to see so many faces of friends. Welcome you to our new temporary abode.

This is an important moment for my administration because I spent such a long amount of time campaigning on education reform. It's been the hallmark of my time as Governor of Texas. My focus will be on making sure every child is educated, as the President of the United States, as well.

Both parties have been talking about education reform for quite a while. It's time to come together to get it done so that we can truthfully say, "In America, no child will be left behind, not one single child."

We share a moment of exceptional promise, a new administration, a newly sworn-in Congress. And we have a chance to think anew and act anew. All of us are impatient with the old lines of division. All of us want

a different attitude here in the Nation's Capital. All in this room, as well as across the country, know things must change.

We must confront the scandal of illiteracy in America, seen most clearly in high-poverty schools where nearly 70 percent of fourth graders are unable to read at a basic level. We must address the low standing of America test scores amongst industrialized nations in math and science, the very subjects most likely to affect our future competitiveness. We must focus the spending of Federal tax dollars on things that work. Too often, we have spent without regard for results, without judging success or failure from year to year. We must face up to the plague of school violence. With an average of 3 million crimes committed against students and teachers inside public schools every year, that's unacceptable in our country.

Change will not come by adding a few new Federal programs to the old. If we work only at the edges, our influence will be confined to the margins. We need real reform. Change will not come by disdaining or dismantling the Federal role of education. I believe strongly in local control of schools. I trust local folks to chart the path to excellence.

But educational excellence for all is a national issue and, at this moment, is a Presidential priority. I have seen how real education reform can lift up scores and schools and effectively change lives. And real education reform reflects four basic commitments.

First, children must be tested every year in reading and math—every single year. Not just in the third grade or the eighth grade, but in the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh and eighth grade.

I oppose a national test, one designed here in Washington, DC, because I know it would undermine local control of schools and undermine State curricula. But States should test each student each year. Without yearly testing, we don't know who is falling behind and who needs help. Without yearly testing, too often we don't find failure until it is too late to fix.

Consider what some parents face under the current system in some States. A child may pass the third grade reading test; he or she gets in the eighth grade and, lo and be-

hold, fails the eighth grade test. And the parent says, "Who do I hold accountable? What happened? My child was successful in the third, and here, he or she is in the eighth. What went wrong? How come? Where did the system let me down?"

Too much precious time has elapsed in this case for us to achieve what we want: every child being able to learn. Testing every child every year is the way to stop the cycle. We must care enough to ask how our children are doing. We must have the data to know how poor and minority children are doing, to see if we're closing the achievement gap in America.

Annual measurement is a special concern of mine. I understand it's crucial—it's a crucial part of a solid reform package. But the good news is, I'm not alone. Take, for example, Congressman George Miller from California. Some might think it odd that the President—a Republican President be mentioning a Democrat, a Member of the House. But he and I have had discussions already. He understands the importance of strong accountability. And we're going to work together to make sure this is an integral part of a reform package coming through the House and Senate.

Secondly, the agents of reform must be schools and school districts, not bureaucracies. Teachers and principals, local and State leaders must have the responsibility to succeed and the flexibility to innovate. One size does not fit all when it comes to educating the children in America. School districts, school officials, educational entrepreneurs should not be hindered by excessive rules and redtape and regulation.

The principle here is a basic one. If local schools do not have the freedom to change, they cannot be held accountable for failing to change. Authority and accountability must be aligned at the local level, or schools will have a convenient excuse for failure: "I would have done it this way but some central office or Washington, DC, caused me to do it another way."

Flexibility in education spending is a special concern of Members of both parties with whom I've discussed. Today I had a good meeting with the chairman of the Education Committee in the House, John Boehner. I

know he shares my passion for flexibility at the local level, as do people like Senator Judd Gregg or Tim Hutchinson.

Third, many of our schools, particularly low income schools, will need help in the transition to higher standards. When a State sets standards, we must help schools achieve those standards. We must measure. We must know. And if a school or school district falls short, we must understand that help should be applied. Senator Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico brought this up to our attention, about the need to make sure there is a transition period between the moment of consequence and the first indication of failure.

Once failing schools are identified, we will help them improve. We will help them help themselves. Our goal is to improve public education. We want success. And when schools are willing to accept the reality that the accountability system points out and are willing to change, we will help them.

Fourth, American children must not be left in persistently dangerous or failing schools. When schools do not teach and will not change, parents and students must have other meaningful options. And when children and teenagers go to school afraid of being threatened or attacked or worse, our society must make it clear, it's the ultimate betrayal of adult responsibility.

Parents and children who have only bad options must eventually get good options if we're to succeed all across the country. There are differences of opinions about what those options should be. I made my opinion very clear in the course of the campaign and will take my opinion to the Hill and let folks debate it.

Today I was pleased to see that Senator Joe Lieberman brought up his plan that includes different options for parents. It's a great place to begin. He and I understand that an accountability system must have a consequence. Otherwise, it's not much of an accountability system.

These four principles are the guides to our education reform package. Yet today I'm offering more than principles; I'm sending a series of specific proposals to the United States Congress, my own blueprint for reform. I want to begin our discussion in detail with the Members of the House and the Sen-

ate because I know we need to act by this summer so that the people at the local level can take our initiatives and plan for the school year beginning next fall.

I'm going to listen to suggestions from folks. If somebody has got a better idea, I hope they bring it forward because the Secretary and I will listen. We've got one thing in mind: an education system that's responsive to the children; an education system that educates every child; an education system that I'm confident can exist; one that's based upon sound, fundamental curriculum; one that starts teaching children to read early in life; one that focuses on systems that do work; one that heralds our teachers and makes sure they've got the necessary tools to teach; but one that says every child can learn. In this great land called America, no child will be left behind.

It's an honor to be here. I'm so thrilled you all came. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:08 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Education Roderick R. Paige, who introduced the President; former Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander; Diana Natalicio, president, University of Texas at El Paso; and Charles Miller, chairman, Meridian Advisors, Ltd.

## Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Bipartisan Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

January 24, 2001

### Legislative Agenda

**The President.** I'm honored to host the leaders of the Senate and the House. I want to thank you all for coming. I really, really appreciate it. This is the sixth meeting I've had with legislators since I've been sworn in. It is a habit I intend to keep, because I understand the best way to advance an agenda for the country is to work together.

I hope people are now beginning to realize that when I said the executive branch is willing to work with the legislative branch and do what's right for the country, it's not hollow words; it's what I believe we need to do.

Expectations are that we can't come together to get things done. Our mission is to

exceed the expectations. So I want to thank you all so much for coming. We're going to have a frank dialog about a lot of issues, and I'm going to start by reminding that we know the difference between the executive branch and the legislative branch, but I do believe the President and the Vice President can play a part, a strong part, in helping advance an American agenda.

So thanks for coming. I'd be glad to answer a few questions.

**Attorney-General-Designate John Ashcroft**

**Q.** Sir, I'm wondering about the Ashcroft confirmations. There seems to be little question that he's going to be confirmed, and yet there's this one week delay. I'm wondering, what do you think Democrats are doing?

**The President.** I think they're making sure that when they confirm him all questions have been answered.

**Efforts at Bipartisanship**

**Q.** Sir, where is the common ground on the issues that really divide the two sides, specifically the size of your tax cut and on school vouchers? How can you possibly reach agreement on those two issues?

**The President.** We'll just have to see. That's part of what a dialog is all about. I think that it's important for me to explain my position. It's important for me to hear other's positions. It's important for me to understand where there's resistance and why. But it all happens with good, honest discussion, a frank discussion about positions.

I look forward to explain to any Member that's concerned about tax relief and why, why I proposed it. And I think the evidence is going to become more and more clear that the economy is—it's not as hopeful as we'd like, which I hope will strengthen my case.

**Q.** Mr. President, you talked about frank and honest discussions. Are you willing to give on either one of those issues, or is there a—

**The President.** Well I'm certainly not willing to negotiate with myself. [Laughter] Particularly in your column. [Laughter]

**Legislative Agenda on Education**

**Q.** You talked about bipartisanship, sir, but you've also issued legislation or legislative proposals prior to meeting with the Democrats to work on negotiations. Does that imply that you want them to just take your positions and pass them?

**The President.** It is in recognition of what a Presidential campaign is all about. I don't believe Dick and I would be sitting here had we not taken strong positions on key issues. And I told the American people if I had the honor of being the President, I would submit those positions I was campaigning on to the legislative branch, and that's exactly what I've done.

So if you look at the education proposals we submitted to the Congress, those are based on what I campaigned on. That's exactly what I told the people I would do, and that's what I'm here to remind the Members of the Congress. That's what I am going to do. And I can't wait to have an honest discussion about education, for example, the cornerstone of which is strong accountability.

And I'm going to make the case here, and I'll continue to make the case to anybody who will listen that in order to make sure every child is educated—I mean every child—we must measure—we must understand whether or not children are learning, because the likelihood of poor children being shuffled through the system is increased if we don't measure.

And I hope we can find people—I hope people will listen, because I feel passionately on the subject.

**Q.** Sir, would you be—a proposal that didn't include—

**The President.** John [John Roberts, CBS News], it's a pleasure. One question per session.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:25 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

**Remarks at the Swearing-In  
Ceremony for Roderick R. Paige  
as Secretary of Education**

*January 24, 2001*

Thank you very much. Mr. Vice President, thank you very much; Dr. Paige, family members. I look out and see so many Members from the United States Senate. Mr. Chairman, thank you for coming. Senator Kennedy, I appreciate you being here, as well. I don't want to skip anybody, but the reason I mention those two, they happen to be the chairman and ranking minority of the Education Committee. I see Members from the House who are here. Thank you all for coming, as well, of course, Senator Hutchison, from the home State of Dr. Paige and the President—[laughter]—John Culberson from the district which represents Houston. So, thank you for coming. I am honored you are here.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is an honor to witness the swearing-in of a man who will help us see important reforms for education become reality.

The Vice President and I were so pleased to be invited and are pleased to be here in this important building. It is an important moment, and we certainly were not going to miss it. I wanted to see the beginning of a new era in public education.

Dr. Paige and I share a basic commitment: We will work to bring excellence to all public schools all across America. I picked a really good man to run this Department, a man of integrity, a man of common sense, a down-to-earth man who knows how to get the job done.

My administration has no greater priority than education, and Dr. Paige and I share that urgency. And there's no greater champion of reform than the man I am about to witness be sworn in as the Secretary of Education.

Every problem now facing our Nation's public schools Dr. Paige faced as superintendent of the Houston Independent School District: children unable to read at basic levels; falling scores in science and math; problems with discipline and order. Dr. Paige answered those challenges with the

spirit we must now bring to all our schools and all our districts in every State.

He did not tolerate indifference or mediocrity. He demanded the highest standards of students in schools, and people rose to the challenge. He proved that poverty does not need to be a barrier to achievement. He stressed reading as the key to all learning, and he measured progress, holding schools accountable for results. As Dr. Paige takes his new assignment, Houston is now a city proud of its schools and a city more hopeful for its children.

Rod Paige gained his passion for education from his own background. His mother was a librarian, and his dad was a school principal. His three sisters have dedicated their careers to teaching and education. And we welcome them to this ceremony today.

In his distinguished career, Rod Paige has seen firsthand what works. He has not just talked about education reform; he's practiced it. And that's why I picked him. He has shown an ability to reach across party lines, to cross old divisions for the sake of our children. I value all these qualities, and our country needs them.

We have great and urgent work to do. I'm honored to have this good man to be our partner in reform.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:24 p.m. in the Barnard Auditorium at the Department of Education. In his remarks, he referred to Senator James M. Jeffords, chairman, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pension; and Representative John Culberson, newly elected to Texas' Seventh Congressional District. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Paige.

**Remarks at Merritt Extended  
Elementary School**

*January 25, 2001*

It's always a good sign when the principal gets a standing ovation—[laughter]—from teachers and parents. Having spent some quality time with you, I now understand why.

First, Mr. Superintendent, thank you very much. Your reputation is a strong one because you believe every child can learn and are willing to work hard and make the tough

decisions to make sure every child does learn in the District. Mr. Superintendent, thanks for coming.

I am so pleased and honored that the chairman of the Senate Education Committee and the ranking minority leader, Senator Jeffords and Senator Kennedy are here; Chairman Boehner, Representative Miller came as well. You all did not have to come. And for you to come is not only a great honor for this school, but Laura and I really appreciate it.

I'm also pleased the First Lady is here. I always used to say, you can always judge the nature of a man by the company he keeps. *[Laughter]* And I keep pretty darn good company—*[laughter]*—particularly when it comes to children and reading and education. She is a former public school librarian who loves children, who loves books, and has got the ability to combine the two. And I love her.

Dr. Shannon, thanks for coming. Those of us who have been involved with public education know this irrefutable fact, that the quality of a school depends on the quality of a principal. That when you find a good principal, the CEO of a school, you'll find a school that achieves what we all want: every child learning.

And there are some basic principles involved. One is to have leadership, not only at the district level but at the school level, set the highest of high standards. Leaders that understand that every child can learn and refuse to accept excuses when they don't. Dr. Shannon believes that way. She asked a question, "Why aren't our children achieving?" And when they begin to achieve, she raises the bar. That's what a leader does.

Secondly, and the reason we've come to Merritt, besides getting out of the White House—*[laughter]*—is to herald what happens inside the walls here. And what happens here is there is a strong sense of accountability, which means there is a strong sense of the possible. Accountability is so important. And by accountability I mean testing children to determine whether or not children are learning. I believe it's the cornerstone of reform. I believe it's the essence of excellence in education, and I believe it's im-

portant to do so, to test every year, to make sure children are not left behind.

I worry about a system that doesn't test, because I ask the question, like Dr. Shannon ask the question, "How do you know if you don't?" I worry about a system that periodically tests, because one year you may test, and everything is fine. In 4 years, you measure again, and all of a sudden something isn't fine, and you've missed 4 years of opportunity to make sure a child doesn't slip behind.

Accountability is important for students. It's important for—and I know students don't like to take tests, and I'm confident the parents here heard the same thing Laura and I heard when our daughters went to Austin High School, "We're sick of tests." And my answer was, "Well, I'm sorry you're sick of it, but we want to know." We, the adults, want to know whether or not you're learning, because if you're not, we expect something else to happen. So it's important for children to take tests so they can tell how they stand.

It's important for parents. There's a lot of discussion about parental involvement. Senator Kennedy asked a very good question—how is parental involvement? I thought the principal gave a very good answer. But there's no better way to encourage parental involvement than to diagnose, on a child-by-child basis, where a child stands. There's no better way to get a parent's attention than for a principal to send the word, "Well, we're having a little trouble with your child. We want your child to succeed."

The worst thing that can happen from a parent's perspective is there be no information. The worst thing that can happen is that the parent think everything is fine: "Well, my child may have passed a test in the third grade, but there's been no measurement in the fourth, fifth, or sixth, so I will just assume as a parent that everything is fine, and then wake up and realize things aren't fine." To me, that's a shame when and if our systems do that to parents.

And finally, measurement is important for management and teachers. First, I want to thank the teachers. Teaching is a noble profession. We need more teachers. And one of the jobs that Laura is going to take on—and to a certain extent, I hope I can, too—



is to encourage youngsters to become teachers. That means, of course, safe classrooms. It means making sure teachers can teach a curriculum that works.

There's nothing better than combining the love of a teacher with the talent and tools necessary to be able to make sure children learn. But it also means convincing teachers of the importance and power of accountability. A good teacher welcomes accountability, because a good teacher understands that measurement is the kernel for success. A good teacher will be able to see in real stark terms the fruits of his or her labor. A good teacher is somebody who says, "Give me a chance to succeed, and I can prove I can succeed."

There's a lot of people in our society who fear accountability. Dr. Shannon, when asked by one of the Members of the congressional delegation about accountability, she said, "At first people were afraid of accountability." And I can understand that. If you haven't been held accountable, and all of a sudden somebody starts holding you accountable, it's going to create a certain sense of anxiety. But I suspect she'll testify to this fact, that once the accountability measures came in place, once people got used to what it meant to be accountable—that accountability is not a tool to punish but a tool to reward and a tool necessary to correct deficiencies; it's a positive tool; it's a positive application—then people begin to accept the importance of a strong measurement system.

So we're here to applaud leadership and teachers, and we're here to applaud a school and a district that has got a vision, a vision of high standards and strong measurement systems; a school that not only measures, but when it finds deficiency, corrects; a school that recognizes an accountability will work when you view each child as a child, not as some group—part of a group. Accountability system says every child matters, and when we find a child deficient, we're going to correct.

Some say, "The accountability systems tend to restrict curriculum, that, oh, all the school will do is teach the test." This school proves that's not the case. This school focuses on basic education in reading and math. And

by the way, they've got a fabulous curriculum for reading, one that works.

But this school also is a school that enriches beyond the basics of reading and math. It's a school that's got a curriculum that is focused on basic education, but it's a school also that understands the importance of the arts. It's a school that broadens the horizons of the students.

We're here to tout excellence and to thank—to thank the good folks in this institution, inside this building, who love our children and are willing to put their love into practice in a system that works.

So, Dr. Shannon, thank you very much for having us. We're so honored to be here. Again, I want to thank the Members of the congressional delegation that came up, as well. It's a real treat to be able to walk around the halls of a successful school and, most importantly, be able to look children in the eye and wish them all the best, encourage them to go to college. But thanks for having us. It's our honor to be here.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 a.m. in the multi-purpose room. In his remarks, he referred to Nancy R. Shannon, principal, Merritt Extended Elementary School; and Paul L. Vance, superintendent, District of Columbia Public Schools.

## Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Education Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

January 25, 2001

### Legislative Agenda on Education

**The President.** Thank you all for coming. It's an honor to be here with the chairman and ranking member of the committee, members of the Education Committee in the House of Representatives.

We're going to spend a lot of time talking about education until a bill works its way through the House and the Senate. It's a priority of mine, but the good news is, it's also a priority of the Members here around the table. And I am actually confident that we can forge an education bill that will achieve a lot of objectives: high standards, local control of schools, but the most important objective of all is that every child in America gets

educated. It is a national priority, and it's a goal that I'm actually confident that this great Nation can achieve.

So it's an honor to welcome Members of the Congress here to have a frank discussion. I'll be glad to answer a few questions.

### **Federal Reserve Chairman's Congressional Testimony**

**Q.** Is there a comment at all on Mr. Greenspan's comment this morning on the need for tax cuts and the effect it might have on the economy?

**The President.** I was pleased to hear Mr. Greenspan's words. I felt they were measured and just right. He recognizes that we need good monetary policy and sound fiscal policy to make sure that the economy grows. So I was pleased.

**Q.** He also seemed to indicate that having the tax cut in place was one of the issues—or one of the main criteria in having a tax cut that would benefit the economy. Do you read that as support for a retroactive tax cut or an accelerated measure?

**The President.** I don't think Alan Greenspan was supporting any particular plan. I know he wasn't going to the Hill to say, "Well, President Bush has got the right plan." I felt like he was speaking about policy in general. His job is to report to the Congress in an objective way, and that's exactly how I read it.

I've got my view of how to enact tax relief. I suspect others in the Congress will have their view. But what Alan Greenspan was saying to the Nation is that in order to make sure our economy grows, we've got to have good monetary policy and sound fiscal policy, a component of which is wise spending, as well as tax relief.

### **Bipartisanship**

**Representative John A. Boehner.** Mr. President, on behalf of my colleagues—if I could just say something.

On behalf of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I want to thank you for inviting us here. All week you've spent a great deal of time talking about your proposal but, more importantly, meeting with Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle, trying to

build consensus for this very serious proposal.

And on behalf of all of us, I just want to say, thank you.

**The President.** Mr. Chairman, thank you.

### **Dinner With Catholic Leaders**

**Q.** Mr. President, you're meeting tonight with the Archbishop; what do you hope to accomplish?

**The President.** I hope to have a good meal. [Laughter] I will tell you something about the Cardinal-to-be and the other leaders I'll be meeting with. These are men of great faith, huge compassion for the poor and the oppressed. I can't wait to talk to them about education reform, because education to the Cardinal-to-be is a paramount concern. He knows what we know: An educated child is one much more likely to realize the greatness of America. And I'm going to discuss that, and I'm there to listen, as well. It's a huge honor to go there, and I'm looking forward to it.

### **Faith-Based Initiatives**

**Q.** Mr. President, how do you expect to address concerns about separation of church and state in dealing with faith-based initiatives, both for education and other services?

**The President.** I'll have a lot to say about that next week. But I will just tell you this, that a compassionate society is one which recognizes the great power of faith, not a particular religion, for the great power faith can play in the lives of everyday citizens and that we in Government must not fear faith-based programs. We must welcome faith-based programs.

This issue was debated, hotly debated in the Congress in previous sessions, all based upon what's called charitable choice, which is a constitutional provision which recognizes Government will never fund religion. But Government should not fear funding programs that can change people's lives, nor should Government fear funding—providing funding for an individual and allow that individual to choose a faith-based program, so long as there is a secular alternative available.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:07 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Archbishop Theodore E.

McCarrick of the Archdiocese of Washington, who will be elevated to cardinal on February 21 at a ceremony at the Vatican. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

**Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Colin L. Powell as Secretary of State**

*January 26, 2001*

**The President.** Thank you all for coming. It is a great privilege for all of us to be here for the swearing in of our new Secretary of State. It's also a great privilege to be here with Alma, the true strength of the Powell family.

As I said in my Inaugural Address, America remains involved in the world, by history and by choice, shaping a balance of power that favors freedom. To achieve this goal, we need a foreign policy that serves America's vital interests and speaks for our highest ideals, a foreign policy that is clear and consistent and confident, true to our values and true to our friends.

To lead this effort at this unique moment in history, I picked a unique leader. Many times over the past four decades, America has called on Colin Powell, and each time he has answered the call. When his country called him to serve as a foot soldier, Colin Powell answered the call. When his country needed him to help defeat a tyrant brutalizing his neighbors and destabilizing a vital region of the world, he answered the call. When America needed him to serve the high purpose of building the character of our young and to promote volunteerism, he answered the call.

Today America calls on Colin Powell again. He is a leader who understands that America must work closely with our friends in times of calm if we want to be able to call upon them in times of crisis. He understands that our Nation is at its best when we project our strength and purpose with humility. He understands that if we do not set our own agenda, it will be set by others, by adversaries abroad or by the crisis of the day.

I know of no better person to be the face and voice of America diplomacy than Colin Powell. His dignity and integrity will add to

the strength and authority of America around the world.

Congratulations, Mr. Secretary.

[At this point, Secretary Powell made brief remarks.]

**The President.** Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:53 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Alma Powell, wife of Secretary Powell. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Powell.

**Remarks at a Luncheon With Freshman Members of the House of Representatives**

*January 26, 2001*

Welcome to the people's house. Here we are in week one. I hope you're as enthused about your job as I am about mine. I, first, look forward to saying hello to each of you, and I know the Vice President does, as well.

We've begun a series of policy initiatives. First is education. I've been meeting with mostly the senior Members of the House and Senate—although, a few freshmen have shown up in the meetings—to hear about a vision that I think is so important for America, and that is, every child get educated and a way to do so.

There will be other issues that we'll be talking about: military preparedness, Medicare and health care, Social Security reform, tax relief. And I look forward to working with you all. I come to Washington with a positive spirit of the possible, that I refuse to let any bitterness that may be lingering around inhibit us from rising above the expectations of the American people.

The people—some people—take a look at the election and say, "Well, gosh, the country is too divided. Nothing will happen." Our mission is to prove them wrong. It's to not only restore faith in Government by results, positive results for the people, but also to restore faith in Government by how we behave, by how we conduct the people's business. I know we can do it.

I'm honored you all are here. Congratulations on your elections. We look forward to working with you, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:09 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

**Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Donald H. Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defense**  
*January 26, 2001*

It's a great honor to welcome Secretary Rumsfeld and his wife and family here to the Oval Office. Thank you all for coming.

In swearing in Don Rumsfeld, we have just sworn in a leader of exceptional strength and ability and vision. And I'm grateful that he has returned to service to our country.

Don and I have set three clear goals to guide American defense policy. First, we will strengthen the bond of trust between the American people and those who wear our Nation's uniform. We'll give them the tools they need and the respect they deserve.

Second, we will work to defend our people and our allies against growing threats: the threats of missiles; information warfare; the threats of biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons. We will confront the new threats of a new century.

Third, we will begin creating the military of the future, one that takes full advantage of revolutionary new technologies. We will promote the peace by redefining the way wars will be fought. These are great and exciting objectives, and our new Secretary of Defense is uniquely qualified to accomplish them.

As a former Navy pilot, Don Rumsfeld understands that if we ever send our forces into harm's way, we must send them fully prepared and equipped for the dangers they face. As a highly successful businessman, he understands that we must modernize and transform the business of defense, getting the value for our taxpayers' money. He is willing to challenge the status quo inside the Pentagon.

As the head of the National Commission on Ballistic Missile Threats, he is the among

the country's most informed experts on this vital issue. As a former Congressman, he understands the need to work closely with the Congress. As a former White House Chief of Staff, as a former Secretary of Defense, he understands what it takes to be a leader.

This is an exceptional history of service, and Don Rumsfeld is an exceptional man with integrity and honesty as a cornerstone of his foundation.

Mr. Secretary, congratulations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:23 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Joyce Rumsfeld, wife of Secretary Rumsfeld. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Rumsfeld.

**Remarks Following a Meeting With Governors and an Exchange With Reporters**

*January 26, 2001*

**Legislative Agenda on Education**

**The President.** Let me—first of all, I want to thank my Governor friends for coming. From all around the country, people came—from Idaho, from the South. The head of the National Governors is here, and of course, the soon-to-be-head of the National Governors. I'm honored you all came. It's good to see you in a new setting—for me, at least. And we had a long discussion about education.

These Governors made education their number one priority in their State, and obviously they're keenly aware of the role of Federal Government. And we've had a really good discussion about how to make their jobs easier. And their job is to make sure every child gets educated, which is the noblest of all calling in America.

So I appreciate your coming. It's always good to be talking to people who know what they're talking about. And when it comes to public education, Governors really understand the subject. So I'm grateful you're here.

I'll be glad to answer a few questions.

**Vandalism**

**Q.** Mr. President, are you offended, sir, by the reports of vandal—acts of vandalism

by outgoing members of the Clinton administration?

**The President.** I'm so happy to be here—[laughter]—that I'm looking forward. There might have been a prank or two; maybe somebody put a cartoon on the wall—that's okay. It's time now to move forward. It's time to focus our attention on what's possible and how to get children educated. I'm excited about what this week has brought. I'm excited about my job.

### **Stem Cell Research**

**Q.** Mr. President, do you believe that Federal money should be used or spent on fetal tissue or stem cell research derived from induced abortions?

**The President.** No, I don't.

**Q.** Will you have an Executive order to that effect?

**The President.** I believe there's some exciting—I believe there's some wonderful opportunities for adult stem cell research. I believe we can find stem cells from fetuses that died a natural death. But I do not support research from aborted fetuses.

**Q.** I assume that you'll sign an Executive order to that or make that the law of the land?

**The President.** I'll let you know when I decide all policy decisions. But I do not—to answer your question, the answer is no.

### **Russia-U.S. Relations**

**Q.** Mr. President, have you responded to President Putin's letter? And do you plan to review Russian relations with the United States before you go forward in any arms control talks?

**The President.** I have not responded to the letter yet. I will, of course. I read about it—I might have even read about it before it hit Washington. [Laughter]

What was the second half of your question?

### **Arms Control Talks**

**Q.** Do you plan to review the U.S. relations with the Russians before you start up on arms control talks?

**The President.** Well, you may remember in the campaign I talked about two aspects about arms. One was that I am going to go

forward with, along with Secretary Rumsfeld, about plans for a missile defense system. But I also said that I think it's important for us, commensurate with our ability to keep the peace, to reduce our nuclear arsenal on our own. And I'm going to fulfill that campaign promise.

That may—we'll see how that affects possible arms talks. My point is, is that I want America to lead the nation—lead the world toward a more safe world when it comes to nuclear weaponry. On the offensive side, we can do so. And we can do so on the defensive side, as well.

### **First Week in Office**

**Q.** Mr. President, it's the end of your first week.

**Assistant Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe.** Thank you. Lights.

**The President.** Wait a minute, this may be this—[laughter]—end of my first week? Yes.

**Q.** It's the end of your first week. How do you think it's going? How are you settling in? And were there any surprises?

**The President.** Oh, let's see. Well, first of all, it's been a great week. I'm excited about my job. I really appreciate—I guess the biggest, most pleasant surprise, if you'd call it that, was how receptive Members of Congress are to come here to the White House to talk about how we can work together. I really appreciate both Republicans and Democrats coming. I think we've met with 90 Members of Congress here in the first week. And I think, to a person, that they're interested in figuring out if we can't exceed the expectations that now exist around the country that nothing is going to get done.

I'm honored to be here, and I'm looking forward to welcoming former President Bush back to his old residence. He's just not going to be sleeping in the master suite this time around. [Laughter]

**Q.** When's he coming? When's he coming?

**The President.** He's coming today.

**Q.** How about settling in on a personal basis, on your personal life? Are you settling in—

**The President.** My personal life, we're great. The dogs—the best news is, the dogs

seem to have adjusted. The cat that was howling on the first night is now more comfortable with her territory, and so she's sleeping through the night.

My wife is going to make a great First Lady. She is just as comfortable as she can be with people, no matter if they're with a fancy title, or not.

And the White House staff is just remarkably generous people. And we're settling in. And it's a huge honor to live in the people's house. And I understand the honor. And I'm going to uphold the honor.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland, outgoing chair, and Gov. John Engler of Michigan, incoming chair, National Governors' Association. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

### **Statement on the Earthquake in India**

*January 26, 2001*

I am saddened by the news of the tragic earthquake centered in India's Gujarat state this morning. I extend my condolences and those of the American people to the families of the many victims in the cities and villages of Gujarat and elsewhere. Earthquakes know no political boundaries: I send condolences to the people affected in neighboring Pakistan as well. We stand ready to assist as needed and as desired by the Governments.

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### **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

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#### ***January 20***

In the evening, the President and Laura Bush attended several Inaugural balls.

#### ***January 22***

In the evening, the President met with Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Dennis Hastert.

The White House announced that the President will travel to San Cristobal, Mexico, on February 16.

#### ***January 23***

In the morning, the President had separate telephone conversations with President Vicente Fox of Mexico and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

In the afternoon, the President met with Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC.

#### ***January 24***

In the morning, the President had separate telephone conversations with King Fahd and Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudia Arabia, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, and King Abdullah II of Jordan.

In the evening, the President met with Senator John McCain.

Later, the President had separate telephone conversations with President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea and President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland.

#### ***January 25***

In the evening, the President had a telephone conversation with Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany.

Later, the President and Laura Bush traveled to Hyattsville, MD, where they met with Catholic leaders at the residence of Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick of the Archdiocese of Washington, DC, after which they returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President invited Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada to the White House on February 5.

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### **Nominations Submitted to the Senate**

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The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

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***Submitted January 20***

Colin Luther Powell,  
of Virginia, to be Secretary of State.

Paul Henry O'Neill,  
of Pennsylvania, to be Secretary of the Treasury.

Donald Henry Rumsfeld,  
of Illinois, to be Secretary of Defense.

Gale Ann Norton,  
of Colorado, to be Secretary of the Interior.

Ann Margaret Veneman,  
of California, to be Secretary of Agriculture.

Donald Louis Evans,  
of Texas, to be Secretary of Commerce.

Tommy G. Thompson,  
of Wisconsin, to be Secretary of Health and Human Services.

Melquiades Rafael Martinez,  
of Florida, to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

Spencer Abraham,  
of Michigan, to be Secretary of Energy.

Roderick R. Paige,  
of Texas, to be Secretary of Education.

Anthony Joseph Principi,  
of California, to be Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.,  
of Indiana, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Christine Todd Whitman,  
of New Jersey, to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

***Submitted January 24***

Norman Y. Mineta,  
of California, to be Secretary of Transportation.

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**Checklist  
of White House Press Releases**

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The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

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***Released January 22***

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Statement by the Press Secretary: First Presidential Meeting With Foreign Leaders

Statement by the Press Secretary: Restoration of the Mexico City Policy

Announcement: Attendees at the Reading Roundtable

***Released January 23***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

***Released January 24***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer on the President's meeting with Senator John McCain

***Released January 25***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Statement by Press Secretary on the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada

***Released January 26***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Statement by Press Secretary on the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom

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**Acts Approved  
by the President**

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NOTE: No acts approved by the President were received by the Office of the Federal Register during the period covered by this issue.